

Public Complaints Policy and Procedure

This policy sets out procedures for dealing with any complaints that members of the public may have about Llangors Community Council's administration and procedures or the conduct of the Council's employees.

The conduct of Councillors is primarily covered by the Local Government Act 2000 Model Code of Conduct for members and advice on that may be sought from the Monitoring Officer of Powys County Council.

A complaint is defined as "an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more members of the public about the Council's action or lack of action about the standard of a service provided."

The Council considers that any complaints regarding the standards of services provided by the Council should be placed in writing within 6 months of the perceived problem occurring. Any complaint received after this time will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

In Summary:

All complaints will be recorded in the minutes of the Council monthly meeting.

The Clerk in consultation with the Chair, in receiving a complaint is responsible to resolve the issue, if possible, immediately. Should the issue appear serious then it shall be referred to full council as soon as practically possible for resolution. Should there be a delay in response time the complainant will be kept informed as to the delay and the reason for such a delay.

All complaints will be responded to with minimum delay commensurate with thoroughness.

A written reply to the complaint as to the outcome and the reasons for it will be sent to the complainant.

Those dissatisfied with the outcome shall be directed to complain to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

Procedure Stage 1

1. If a complaint about procedures or administration is notified orally to a Councillor or the Clerk to the Council and they cannot satisfy the complainant fully forthwith, the complainant shall be asked to put the complaint in writing to the Clerk and be assured that it will be dealt with promptly after receipt. The complainant is required to provide their name and full postal address for correspondence. An acknowledgement of the written complaint will be issued within 5 working days of receipt.
2. If a complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the Clerk, they shall be advised to address it to the Chair.
3. On receipt of a written complaint the Clerk or Chair of the Council, as the case may be, shall try to settle the complaint directly with the complainant, but shall not do so in respect of a complaint about the behaviour of the Clerk or a Councillor without first notifying the person complained of and giving them an opportunity for comment on the manner in which it is intended to attempt to settle the complaint. Where the Clerk or Chair receives a written complaint about their own actions, they shall forthwith refer the complaint to the Council.
4. The Clerk or the Chair of the Council shall report to the next meeting of the Council any written complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant, and will be recorded in the minutes.

Procedure Stage 2

1. The Clerk or Chair shall bring any written complaint which has not been settled to the next meeting of the Council (and will be recorded in the minutes) and the Clerk shall notify the complainant of the date on which the complaint will be considered and the complainant shall be offered an opportunity to explain the complaint orally.

2. The Council shall consider whether the circumstances attending any complaint, warrant the matter being discussed in the absence of the press and public (see Standing Order 3d), but any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the Council meeting in public.
3. As soon as may be after the decision has been made, it and the nature of action to be taken, shall be communicated in writing to the complainant.
4. The Council shall defer dealing with any written complaint only if it is of opinion that issues of law or practice arise on which advice is necessary from an external body. The complaint shall be dealt with at the next meeting after the advice has been received.

Procedure Stage 3

1. If still not satisfied the complainant has the right to complain to the
Public Services Ombudsman for Wales
1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae
Pencoed
CF35 5LJ

Please note that in the event of serial facetious, vexatious or malicious complaints from member(s) of the public the Council will consider taking further advice before responding (in accordance with the recommendations of the Local Government Ombudsman).

Member complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the Member Complaints Policy of the Council.

The Clerk and all members of the Community Council are responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy.

This policy is reviewed annually.

Reviewed and adopted at the meeting of Llangors Community Council on:

Signed by Chairperson:

Print Name:
